

REMARKS

This application is a division of Serial No. 09/303,405 filed May 3, 1999 which contains allowed claims directed to an incineration process.

Please note the Information Disclosure Statement filed with this amendment.

The above claims are directed to an iron compound catalyst for inhibiting the generation of dioxin composed of iron oxide particles, iron oxide hydroxide particles or a mixture of iron oxide particles and iron oxide hydroxide particles. The catalyst is characterized by its activity as a catalyst and its physical and chemical properties:

(1) it has a catalytic activity capable of converting not less than 15 % of carbon monoxide into carbon dioxide when 2.8×10^{-4} mol of iron oxide particles obtained by heat-treating the iron compound catalyst in air at a temperature of 800°C for 15 minutes, are instantaneously contacted with 6.1×10^{-7} mol of carbon monoxide at a temperature of 250°C at a space velocity (SV) of 42,400 h⁻¹ in an inert gas atmosphere using a pulse catalytic reactor;

(2) the catalyst particles have

- (i) an average particle size of 0.01 to 2.0 μm ,
- (ii) a BET specific surface area of 0.2 to 200 m²/g,
- (iii) a phosphorus content of not more than 0.02 % by weight,
- (iv) a sulfur content of not more than 0.1 % by weight, and
- (v) a sodium content of not more than 0.2 % by weight.

This invention also includes a process for incinerating municipal solid waste by spraying the iron compound catalyst as set forth above in an amount of 0.01 to 5.0 % by weight per hour based on the weight of dry municipal solid waste, into a combustion chamber of an intermittently operated incinerator using a gas carrying method to contact the iron compound catalyst with a combustion gas.

By using the iron compound catalyst of the invention to inhibit generation of dioxin, in the incineration of municipal solid waste in an intermittently operated incinerator, such as mechanical batch incinerators or semi-continuous incinerators, complete combustion of the municipal solid waste and decomposition dioxin precursors can be achieved. The process inhibits generation of dioxin due to the memory effect upon low-temperature combustion at start-up or shut-down of the incinerator.

For example, (a) upon start-up of the incinerator, the concentration of dioxin in the combustion exhaust gas can be reduced to not more than 10 ngTEQ/Nm³, and during steady operation of the incinerator, the concentration of dioxin in the combustion exhaust gas can be reduced to not more than 8.0 ngTEQ/Nm³; (b) upon start-up of the incinerator, the concentration of carbon monoxide in the combustion exhaust gas can be reduced to not more than 120 ppm and during steady operation of the incinerator, the concentration of carbon monoxide in the combustion exhaust gas can be reduced to not more than 50 ppm; and (c) upon start-up of the incinerator, the concentration of hydrogen chloride in the combustion exhaust gas can be reduced to not more than 60 ppm and during steady operation of the incinerator, the concentration of hydrogen chloride in the combustion exhaust gas can be reduced to not more than 40 ppm.

Applicants discuss below the relevant information contained in the documents cited during examination of the parent application and also explain how the new claims presented above distinguish from the disclosures of the documents cited either individually or in combination. In addition, applicants refer to information and data contained in two attachments to this response, Table 1 and Table 2 presented in the form of a declaration of Mr. T. Matsui made September 21, 2000.

US Patent No. 5,744,690 (Yokoyama et al) discloses a method of incinerating combustible wastes by incinerating the combustible wastes in the presence of a calcium compound and iron compound particles selected from iron oxide particles, ferric oxide hydroxide particles and mixed particles thereof. Yokoyama et al also disclose the use of

spindle-shaped goethite particles of BET specific surface area: 80 m²/g, average major axial diameter: 0.3 μm (in Example 1).

However, as seen from the attached data the content of sulfur is 0.15 % by weight and the content of sodium is 0.28 % by weight, which fall outside of the range of applicants' claims. So, the goethite particles used in Example 1 of Yokoyama et al are different from those of the present invention.

As a result, conversion of carbon monoxide into carbon dioxide in case of using goethite aggregates used in Example 1 of Yokoyama et al, is 1.5 %, which is inferior to that of the present invention, falls outside of the range achieved by the present invention.

US Patent No. 4,979,447 (Farrar) discloses a process for improving combustion efficiency in a coal-fired furnace while maintaining acceptable levels of NO_x emissions from such combustion. The coal-fired furnace has at least one site for introducing a pulverized coal into the furnace to develop and maintain a fireball in the furnace and at least one site for introducing air to support combustion of the pulverized coal in the fireball. The process includes introducing at least one site a useful amount of an additive composition for measurably improving combustion efficiency while maintaining acceptable levels of NO_x emissions by controlling excess air requirements to support burning of the pulverized coal. Thus Farrar relates to additive compositions for improving combustion efficiency in coal-fire furnaces and other related types of equipment.

In contrast, the primary reference Yokoyama et al relates to a method of incinerating combustible wastes as does the present invention. Yokoyama et al is in a different field of endeavor from that of Farrar, and therefore, can not be properly combined with Yokoyama et al.

Further, since the iron compound catalyst of the present invention is different from the goethite particles used in Yokoyama et al, even if Farrar is combined with Yokoyama et al, one of ordinary skill in the art would not reasonably expect inhibition of dioxin

generation due to a memory effect upon low-temperature combustion at start-up or shut-down of incinerators.

US Patent No. 4,495,874 (Greskovich et al) discloses a method for combusting high ash content coal in a furnace having a firebox and at least one injection nozzle having a bore for a primary airstream and an annular passage for a secondary airstream, the nozzle communicating with the firebox. The method includes (a) injecting a primary airstream containing pulverized coal which is at least 7 wt % ash and a secondary airstream through the injection nozzle into the flame zone of the furnace firebox and combusting the coal to yield a flame of combustion, and (b) injecting a sufficient amount of oxygen into the secondary airstream such that an oxygen enriched secondary airstream emanates from the injection nozzle and the oxygen concentration of the combined primary and secondary air streams is 22 to 25 vol %. The result is that the amount of ash fines less than one micron in diameter is reduced.

Like Farrar, Greskovich et al is concerned with a process for combusting pulverized coal which is fed into a furnace firebox with a primary airstream which is also supplied with a secondary airstream. By contrast, Yokoyama et al relates to a method of incinerating combustible wastes. Clearly Yokoyama et al invention is in a different field from that of Greskovich et al, and therefore, cannot be properly combined with Greskovich et al.

Further, since the iron compound catalyst of the present invention is different from the goethite particles used in Yokoyama et al, even if Farrar and/or Greskovich et al are combined with Yokoyama et al, one of ordinary skill in the art would still not be able to sufficiently and effectively inhibit dioxin generation due to a memory effect upon low-temperature combustion at start-up or shut-down of an incinerator.

An examination of the above claims on the merits is awaited.

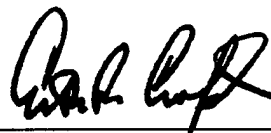
To assist the examiner attached is a copy of the Matsui Declaration filed September 28, 2000 in the parent application.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version With Markings To Show Changes Made."

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By:



Arthur R. Crawford
Reg. No. 25,327

1100 North Glebe Road, 8th Floor
Arlington, VA 22201-4714
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE
IN THE ABSTRACT:

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE:

An iron compound catalyst for inhibiting the generation of dioxin of the present invention, comprise iron oxide particles, iron oxide hydroxide particles or mixed particles thereof having a catalytic activity capable of converting not less than 15 % of carbon monoxide into carbon dioxide when 2.3×10^{-4} mol of iron oxide particles obtained by heat-treating said iron compound catalyst in air at a temperature of 300°C for 15 minutes, are instantaneously contacted with 6.1×10^{-7} mol of carbon monoxide at a temperature of 250°C at a space velocity (SV) of 42,400 h⁻¹ in an inert gas atmosphere using a pulse catalytic reactor, said iron oxide particles or said iron oxide hydroxide particles having an average particle size of 0.01 to 2.0 μ m, a BET specific surface area of 0.2 to 200 m²/g, a phosphorus content of not more than 0.02 % by weight, a sulfur content of not more than 0.6 % by weight and a sodium content of not more than 0.5 % by weight. Such an iron compound catalyst enables complete combustion of the municipal solid waste and decomposition of dioxin precursors even at a low combustion temperature in intermittently operated incinerators such as mechanical batch incinerators or semi-continuous incinerators, and can inhibit the generation of dioxin due to a memory effect upon low-temperature combustion at the start-up or shut-down of the incinerators, without large-scale incinerator renovation or plant and equipment investment.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An iron compound catalyst for inhibiting the generation of dioxin contains iron oxide particles, iron oxide hydroxide particles or mixed particles having a catalytic activity capable of converting not less than 15% of carbon monoxide into carbon dioxide when 2.8×10^{-4} mol of iron oxide particles obtained by heat-treating the iron compound catalyst in air at a temperature of 800°C for 15 minutes, are instantaneously contacted with 6.1×10^{-7} mol of carbon monoxide at a temperature of 250°C at a space velocity (SV) of 42,400 h⁻¹ in an inert gas atmosphere using a pulse catalytic reactor, the iron oxide particles or the iron oxide hydroxide particles have an average particle size of 0.01 to 2.0 μm, a BET specific surface area of 0.2 to 200 m²/g, a phosphorus content of not more than 0.02% by weight, a sulfur content of not more than 0.6% by weight and a sodium content of not more than 0.5% by weight. This iron compound catalyst enables complete combustion of municipal solid waste and decomposition of dioxin precursors even at a low combustion temperature in intermittently operated incinerators such as mechanical batch incinerators or semi-continuous incinerators, and can inhibit dioxin generation of due to a memory effect upon low-temperature combustion at the start-up or shut-down of the incinerators, without large-scale incinerator renovation or plant and equipment investment.